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THE "JORNEY" OF THE BLACKWATER: FROM THE STATE  
PAPERS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

BY DANIEL MAC CARTHY, ESQ.

WITHOUT question, the greatest risk England ever ran of losing her hold upon Ireland—or, in varied phrase, the greatest opportunity Ireland ever had of ridding her soil, at one sweep, of Normen, Palemen, and Undertakers—was after the great fight under the walls of the Fort of Blackwater. That day the valour and skill of an Irish chieftain almost achieved the freedom of his country; but, astonished at the very magnitude of his success, he lacked the decision to close "the barbarous hand" into which that great prize had fallen.

The rebellion of 1598 had long been foreseen by English statesmen; yet, so great was the Queen's aversion to the enormous charge attending the ordinary government of Ireland, that her ministers shrank from urging upon her the additional outlay requisite for any considerable increase of her army. As early as April, 1594, Sir George Carew had, "from his lodging in the Minories," written a long letter to Cecyl to prove, not that rebellion was imminent,—for that he presumed the minister saw as clearly as he did,—but how a rebellion, to be successful, ought to be, and, no doubt, would be, conducted. His opinion of O'Neill was this:—"Tyrone having had his education in our discipline, and naturally valiant, is absolutely and worthily reputed the best man of war of his nation. The most part of his followers are well-trained soldiers, using our weapons, and himself the greatest man of territory and revenue within that kingdom; and at this present, by reason of his great alliance, and, as well for friendship as fear, the absolute commander of all the north of Ireland."

The warning of Carew met with little attention: some trifling supplies were sent to the army in Ireland; but when the rebellion broke out, the whole force there consisted but of 10,082 foot, and 521 horse, of which number about a third were mere Irish, "ready, to use the Queen's words, to run away and join the enemy against her."

In 1595 Sir Henry Russel, the youngest son of Francis, Earl of Bedford, succeeded Sir William Fitz-Williams as Lord Deputy of Ireland, and, "foreseeing a storm of war arising," applied for reinforcements and an experienced commander to be sent from England to his assistance. It was time! for the plans of O'Neill were ripe: he had assembled an army of 1000 horse and 6280 foot, not of the wild kerne of his own country, but of "expert soldiers, who had been trained and exercised to their arms, and had already served in

the wars of the Low Countries." No sooner did the tidings reach him of the coming of Sir John Norreys, with 1300 old soldiers who had served in Bretagne, than he at once burst into rebellion, and seized the Fort of Blackwater, which commanded the passage into the land of Tirowen. On the arrival of Norreys he was compelled to relinquish his prize; but not until he had wasted the surrounding country, and burned the town of Dungannon and his own house in it. The Queen's army was stopped at Armagh for want of provisions; a garrison was placed "within the metropolitan church" of that city, and the troops led back to Dublin, where, by proclamation, O'Neill was declared a traitor, by the name of Hugh O'Neill, and [grand]son of Mathew Fardareugh, i. e. the Blacksmith. Jealousies broke out between Norreys and Russel: the former entered into treaty with O'Neill, which led to a series of short truces; during which Russel was recalled, and a new Deputy, the Lord Borough, "a sharp-witted man, and full of courage," was appointed in his place. Norreys had expected that high post for himself: he sickened of the disappointment, and shortly after died of chagrin. O'Neill had again possessed himself of the Fort of Blackwater, and the Deputy at once led a force to recover it. He succeeded, strengthened its fortifications, and returned to Dublin, having confided the command of it this time to a gallant officer, of the name of Williams. Tyrone again led his "companies" to that Fort of evil omen, and the Deputy again marched to its relief. In mid journey he was stricken by sudden illness, and died, leaving the army without a leader, and Ireland without a governor. Williams, though his small force was half famished, and sickness was amongst them, refused to surrender the Fort. The garrison had eaten their last horse, and were living upon "grass that grew upon the bulwarks." O'Neill had surrounded the place on all sides, and "swore by his barbarous hand, that as long as he could get a cow from the English Pale to feed his companies, he would not leave it." In the meantime Ormond, a stern, cruel man, with a hand of steel and the heart of a lion,—the same who, fifteen years before, had trampled out the great rebellion of Desmond,—was appointed Lieutenant-General of the army; and, until the Queen could make up her mind to the selection of a new Deputy, the civil government of the country was placed in the hands of Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, Sir Robert Gardiner, and two or three others, with the title of Lords Justices; and never were the destinies of a nation confided to men more pusillanimous! The purpose of the following narrative is less to relate the fortunes of the Fort of the Blackwater, though a hero commanded within it, than to tell what happened under its walls; how the grandson of the blacksmith kept his "great oathes;" what the Lords Justices thought of it; and what Queen Elizabeth thought of *them*. Yet the gallant conduct of the officer who commanded the garrison well deserves its

own share of notice; and, therefore, before entering upon "the disastrous journey of Armagh," we will present the reader with the account of one day's assault, and the hero's speech, which—after the usage of times heroic—preceded it.

"1598. Aug<sup>r</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>. *A Book on the State of Ireland* by FRANCIS COSBIE.

"After this mishapp His Honor seeing no possible means to accomplish his desier except he had been able to have had another convenient army to have landed at Loughfoyle, and soe to have sett upon Therle Traytor on all sydes, victualled the Fort [of the Blackwater] placing therein as Counstable a valyant gentillman named Cap<sup>n</sup> Will<sup>ms</sup>, with som ccc soldiers, and after brake up campe and retourned to the Newry, where making but small aboade drewe towards the Cavan in Owreylie's country, and there placed Sir Christopher S<sup>t</sup> Lawrence commander of certaine companies there laide in garrison, and then repayred to Dublin; and there not contynuing long, for that he considered the proportion of victualls left with Capt<sup>n</sup> Williams at the Forte was neerehand consumed, drew thetherwards again with as much expediçõ as might be; and even the same day he cam to Aramagh, Tiroane's forces had beleagured the forte, and in the ende the most valyantest men in his retynewe undertooke to wynne the same; for that they had pfect intelligence that the warde was not onely sick and un-serviceable for the moste pte, but all their victualls consumed; and so advauncinge themselves upp upon their scaling ladders gave a most wonderfull and bould assault; contynuinge the same very long w<sup>h</sup> greate resolucion, as well in their fighte, as contynuallye supplyinge of fresh men in the places of the slayne, hurte, and wyckened; and with great lyklehoode they had wonne the same at that instant if they had met with a cravynne, as they buckled w<sup>h</sup> a man of worthe; for the wortheie constable Capt<sup>n</sup> Williams, when he saw the enemy first approaching to him with so great a resolucion, and assured of their intente, comforted his soldiers in the best manner he might, and tould them that now it was the tyme to shew themselves as beseemed men of their places fighting in the right of their Prince and country, wch if it were their fortunes to whstande the enemies first assaulte, their natures and cowardyse was suche that either they would recule or fight in greater feare, to his and their advantage; not doubting of the victory, by the help of God, wherefore hee wished them in generall, as well the whoole y<sup>t</sup> was very few, as the sicke psonnes that could stand up and but advance their weapons, and to do their duties in that measure, as was fittinge for soldiers in their case, the sight of wch would be a terror to the enemy; and remembrynge lykewyse what reputacion they should get either lyvinge or dyinge like men: where on the contrary pte, no more was to be expected at thenemies hands, if they should pvaile against them, and shame and infamy for ever if either they shoulde yeld their bodies as psoners, or by force to be taken by them lyke a sheepe going to the shambles, and therefore, said he, pull up your harts, for this hand of myne havinge a linstock therein, shall give fyer to this traigne, and bothe blowe youe and myself up into the skyes rather then those miscreants shall enioy this chardge of myne! Upon wch every man that was able to stand and hould a weapon beinge anymated to doe their

best, upon those former speeches, cried out We will dy with honor to the last man.

“Then the Enemy being advaunced to the top of the wall as aforesaid, and coveting by all means to enter, were in that manner received by the soldiers that the ditches were filled with their dead corpses; yet stood they to it right manfully, untill they sawe that the soldiers, contrary to their expectacions, purposed to fight it out to the last man, and for to make their payment sterlinge, the two feild peeces planted in very necessarie places w<sup>h</sup>in the forte, and charged w<sup>h</sup> muscet shot paid them their hyer bothe comynge, stayinge, and retournynge; and glad they were (although it is a custome among them to carrye away as many dead corpses and maymed men as they may), yet for all their cunninge they left xxxiii behind them in the ditches, w<sup>h</sup> all their ladders, and some furniture, for a witnes they had come there; but I ensuer you there was a nomber slaigne and hurte that were conveyed away, and very few of the warde either slaigne or hurte. Upon the next day the Lo. Deputy drewe towards the forte, and at his arryvall made an oracion to the constable and soldiers greatlie commendynge boath him and them for their good service; and after he had victualled the forte; and supplied the same with fresh and able soldiers, he stayed there not long.”

Captain Williams had done the *devoir* of a brave commander; and his half famished garrison, as well the “sicke as the whoole,” had taught O’Neill what English soldiers could do when fighting in the right of their Prince. The Irish chieftain profited by the lesson, and attempted no more assaults, but vigorously set about digging trenches around the fort, and thus cut off from Captain Williams the forlorn hope of future sallies, and the *capture of his enemy’s mares*. These trenches are described as works of amazing magnitude, such as had never yet been seen in Irish warfare; they were more than a mile in length, several feet deep, “with a thorny hedge on the toppe,” and connected with vast tracts of bog; every approach to the unhappy garrison was “plashed,” and rendered impassable for artillery, as the English afterwards found to their heavy cost; and the Irish forces so distributed, that a battle, under every disadvantage, must be fought by any army coming to relieve the Fort. O’Neill was too good a politician not to be informed of the exact state of the country, the resources of the Lords Justices, and the impossibility of their opposing in any effective manner at one time more than one division of his forces. Camden informs us that “the state of Ireland was at this time very much out of order, for all Ulster beyond Dundalk, except seven garrison castles—namely, Newry, Knockfergus, Carlingford, Green Castle, Armagh, Don-drom, and Olderfleet, and almost all Connaught, were revolted.” If any man could have extricated the government from its miserable plight, it would have been Ormond. “Vir magnæ strenuitatis et audaciæ.” Yet even he looked with dismay upon the unequal struggle before him. “The times,” he wrote, “are more miserable than

ever before." "If our wants be not speedily supplied, the whole kingdom will be overthrown." "The garrisons everywhere at this moment are ready to starve." "The soldiers run away daily, though I have hanged many of them in the maritime towns."

"And now to drawe to an ende of this my raw intelligence," writes Francis Cosbie, "Cap" Williams, before rehearsed, lying longe in that unhappy forte w'out any reliefe but suche garrons and horses as he by pollicy could attayne unto for the suffyinge of himselfe and hungry ward, acquainted the estate with this their woeful misery; who, havinge as well regarde of theire distresses, as the saffety of that great bulwarke, sent for the Lo. Liefteñant-Genl to Dublin; where, after debating what courser was best to be held, in the ende concluded that Sir Henry Bagnall should have the general command of this expediçõn."

Such was, indeed, the result of much debating, and greatly contrary was it to the opinion of the civil members of that Council. They, after wringing their hands in utter consternation and indecision, had written to England for advice and help; and, could they have had their way, they would have desired Williams to make the best conditions he could, and surrender the Fort; but the soldiers overruled them. Bagnal cried shame upon the timidity which would bring dishonour upon the army, and insisted upon an instant march to revictual the fort, and drive O'Neill from before its walls. And then was taken the fatal resolution of dividing the English forces into two bodies; one to march without delay to the Blackwater, and the other to proceed against the Cavanaghs. It was the wish, nay, the earnest prayer, of the Council, that Ormond himself should undertake to deal with O'Neill; but it chanced that Bagnal and O'Neill were bitter personal foes; O'Neill had married the Marshal's sister, and out of that alliance had sprung a mutual feeling of deadly hatred. Bagnal entreated Ormond to allow him to meet his enemy, and it was so decided. The rest of this interesting story will best be told in the language of the parties concerned in it. They passed through the various phases of panic, shame, repentance, and recrimination; and, fortunately for us, disastrously for themselves, they wrote long letters under each transition.

"1598. SIR GEEFF FENTON TO CECYL. *June 11<sup>th</sup> from Dublin.*

"I receaved yesterday yo<sup>r</sup> Honors lre wch brought no small gladdness to me, as well for yo<sup>r</sup> saffe delivery out of that trecherous country of Fraunce, as for that by yo<sup>r</sup> retorne the myseries of Ireland are in way to receave some measure of comforte, wch by yo<sup>r</sup> absence they cold not have: and I am not a little sorrye, that there is no better matter from hence to congratulate yo<sup>r</sup> comynge hoame than the unsavory events of this kingdome, which daily do multeply to worse, w'out expectaçõn of better tyll Tirone be turned out of Tyrone, wch I see will not be donn, w'h Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> honor

for the pnte; nor with the saffety of the kingdome, for the tyme to come, without his entire extraçōn and banishment.

“The last truce expired the 7th of this monneth, and w<sup>h</sup>in ii daie after, Tyrone made this devesion of his forces; one pte he sent before the Blackwater, w<sup>h</sup> now he holdeth envyroned, swearing by his barbarous hand, that he will not depte till he carry the forte; another pte he thrust into the Brenny, and at this pnte assalteth the castle of the Cavan there promising not to leave the place so long as he cann gett a cow out of the English Pale to feed his companies.”

“1598. *June 17.* THE LORDS JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

“Where in the forefronte of this fre we made mençōn of the forte of Blackwater, and how yt is blocked by the Traytor Tyrone, not mençōning then for how long tyme it was vittled, wch is but tyll the last of this monneth at the furthest, and forasmuch neither the trayto<sup>r</sup>s force can be removed, nor the place releevd w<sup>h</sup> vittles, but by the cuntenaunce of an army, yt standing so far in the mayne land, as there is no comōdity to succor it by water, wee doubt, that thorow these extremeties, yt may receive suche disaster as wee shalbe sorry for; and yet not hable to remedy yt, not having meanes thereunto for want of force: therefore we thought good upon these consideraçōns to desire yo<sup>r</sup> LLs advice and direction, whether (the great necessity of the forte not being otherwaies to be releevd) we may not advise suche as have charge there, to consider how they may quitt the place with the best advantage for their own saffety. The garrison there consisteth upon 4 companies of foot, suche as in former attempts made by Tyrone against that place, have behaved themselves with great valo<sup>r</sup> and resoluçōn, whose worthie services have well deserved not to leave them to be exposed to the uttermost hazard and cruelty of the ennemy, yf there be any waye to preserve them; in wch respect we humbly pray again to have yo<sup>r</sup> LLs speciall resoluçōn therein with all possible speed. I, the L. Lieftenant, and all the rest of us being not a little greeved to make this ov<sup>r</sup>tire, yf wee cold advise any other meanes to prevent the mischeif by removing the traytors by force; and for my pte, I, the L. Lieftenant (yf thextremety be not to be holpen afterwards) doe thinke yt less dishon<sup>r</sup> to have yt razed or yelded upon composiçōn then the soldiōrs to be left to thuttermost daunger.”

“1598. *June 18, Dublin.* ORMOND to CECYL.

“You write that you of the counsell wear sensible of my lacks; I confess hit is no small hart grefe unto me to hold the place I do, and to want the meanes whearbye I shold be inhabled to perform that I most desier against the traytors. I protest to God the state of the scurvie fort of blackwater, which cañot be longe held, doth more toche my hart then all the spoyles that ever wear made by traytors on myne owne landes. This fort was always falling, and never victualed but ons (by my self) without an armye, to her Majesties exseding charges.

“Your most assured and loving Friend,

“THOMAS ORMÖD ET OSS<sup>r</sup>.”

“1598. *July 7.* SIR G. FENTON to CECYL. *From Dublin.*

“Touching the Forte of Blackwater being the second place now holden for Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> in Ulster, I dowte the nexte newes I write to yo<sup>r</sup> Hono<sup>r</sup> thereof wilbe that that place wilbe forced by the Rebels, and either the garrison putt to the sword, or dryven to quitt the place upon suche condiçions as they cann make for their owne safety.”

“1598. *July 22.* THE LLs JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

“The Forte of Blackwater is yet helde w<sup>h</sup> greate honour and resoluçon by that valyant Gent<sup>n</sup> Capten Thomas Williams, whoe comāndeth it; and althoughe Tyrone have lately bent his whole forces to surprize it, and have lost many men still about yt, whoe have blocked them in on all sydes of that forte, yet that worthie Captain dothe still defende himselfe and the place; and as wee understande hathe latelie by some stratagem issued forthe, and besydes the killing of 2 or 3 principall men of Tyrones, hath gotten divers horses and mares of theires into the forte, which as we are enformed is victualled yet for a month; and wee hope that upon the Lo. Loefftenants coīng hither his Lo. will have an honourable care for the reliefe and supplye of that servitor, and the risk of the soldiors in that forte, who have hitherto with suche hono<sup>r</sup> and resoluçon preserved yt for Her Ma<sup>tie</sup> from the many assaltes used by the rebell to gett yt, wherein wee will assist His Lo. w<sup>h</sup> o<sup>r</sup> best advise and furtheraunce.”

“1598. *July 24.* SIR GEFF. FENTON to CECYL.

“The Forte of Blackwater holdeth out still, notw<sup>h</sup>standinge Tyrone hath lyen affore it above a moneth, and hath spent the most parte of that tyme in plashinge of passes, and digginge deepe hoales in the Rivers, the more to distresse the armye that should come to releeve yt. Cap<sup>n</sup> Thos. Williams comādethe in the forte, hath done many worthys<sup>s</sup>ervices in defence of yt as well by soundry sallyes, wherein he repulsed the traytors and slew some of their best men, as by many rare stratagems by w<sup>h</sup> he hath draiven into the forte many of their horses and garrans, wch stande him and the garrison in good steade for foode: The Gent<sup>n</sup> deserve the great comēdaçions, to whom if yo<sup>r</sup> Hono<sup>r</sup> wolde peure a fre from the LLs acknowledging his good s<sup>s</sup>ervices, yt wold comfort him muche, and give others incoragem<sup>t</sup>.”

“*Extracts of a Letter of Intelligence to SIR G. FENTON.*

“The 13th day I made an excuse to goe into the forte, and the Capten tould me all his casse; w<sup>h</sup> was that he wold keepe the forte yet this moneth; wch he may well doe; for that he hathe gott of late into the forte 17 or 18 of therles mares, w<sup>h</sup> will serve him and his company a good tyme. He prayeth yo<sup>r</sup> Hon<sup>r</sup> to haste away the Queenes armye to succor him, or els that he may know from you w<sup>h</sup>in 20 daies whether he shall make his composiçon with therle or not.

“Therle hath made great plashes betweene Armagh and the blackwater, and there he sayth he will fight w<sup>h</sup> the m<sup>h</sup>shall yf he come to vittell the forte: He lyeth there stronge w<sup>h</sup> as great an armye as ev<sup>r</sup> I saw in the

north, and yet he hath of late geven leave to O'Donnel, M<sup>c</sup>Wm. Magwire, and James M<sup>c</sup>Sorley to go hoame into their countreys and be readie to come agayne when he shall send for them."

"*July 31. ORMOND to BURGHELY.*

"The proporcion of muniçions nowe sent by me w<sup>h</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Marshall to the Blackwater is so great as yt leaves veray litle in the storehouse, and the chardge so excessive as I do not holde the place worthe the victualling agayne, unless Her Highness sende forces to Lochfoyle, wch will be to veray great purpose for Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> service."

"1598. *Aug<sup>t</sup> 2. THE LORDS JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.*

"It may please y<sup>r</sup> LLs to understand that uppon consideraçion had of the forte of Blackwater wch yet holdeth out as we are informed, thoughe with great extremetie, and comparinge likewise the state of Leinster endangered in ev<sup>ry</sup> pte by the rebells of the same province and ayded by forces from Tyrone, as in o<sup>r</sup> laste former letter wee have written, Sir Henry Bagnall the Marshall is now to drawe into Ulster w<sup>h</sup> pte of the armye consisting upon 3500 foote by polle, and about 300 horse, to revittle the Blackwater; and w<sup>h</sup> an other pte of the armye I, the L. Liefteñant Gen<sup>l</sup> w<sup>h</sup> such fewe companies as remayne am to attend the psecution in Leinster.

"The daye appoynted for the Rendevoues for the Ulster armye is the 16<sup>th</sup> of this month; when all the companies are appoynted to assemble at Ardye, and from thence to marche to the Newrie, and so to the Blackwater; the successe and accyidents of wch Journey shalbe advertised to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs as they shall fall out; wch wee pray God to p<sup>s</sup>per to Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> Hon<sup>r</sup>, and the saffetie of the armye, onely we understand that Tyrone hath plashed the waies, and digged deepe holes wth other trenches and fortificaçions to ympeache the armye betweene Armagh and the Blackwater."

"1598. *Augs<sup>t</sup> 14. The Ill Newse out of Ireland.*

"The 12<sup>th</sup> of August thay cam from the Newry to Armaghe: The 14<sup>th</sup> of August theye sete forwardes towards the Blackewater with 4000 footemen and 350 horses:

"Capt: Percy and Cap Cosbey led the firste regiment of foote, being 2000; Cap Percy was hurt: Cosbey slaine; and almoste all the regemente slayne.

"S<sup>r</sup> Henry Bagnall ledd the second regiment, being of 1000, he was shott into the hedd, slayne, and moste of the regemente.

"Sir Calistianes Brooke ledd the horses, being 350, was shott into the belly, and thought to be slayne. Abought 2000 footmen slayne and

Cap: Cosbey	Cap Streete	Cap Bethel
Cap. Evans	Cap. Elsdén	Cap Fortescu
Cap Morgan	Cap Banke	Cap Harvey
Cap Turner	Cap Petty	Cap Molmarey Orrely
Cap Leighe	Cap. Henserve	Cap Bourke

William Poule Commesarey a vollentarey, slayne  
 Jaymes Harrington, soone to Sir Henry Harrinton  
 Maximilaan Brooke taken or slayne,  
 Mr Counstable a vollintarey gentelman slayne."

"1598. Aug<sup>th</sup> 16. THE LLs JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

"It may please y<sup>r</sup> LLps at the L. Lief tenants last being heare, wch was at the tyme of o<sup>r</sup> last dispatch to y<sup>r</sup> LLs of the 2<sup>d</sup> of this mouneth: uppon conferment had in counsell touching the distresse of the Blackwater, and the revitlinge thereof. The Mrshall beinge also present at that consulta<sup>co</sup>n, and sent for expressly by the L. Liefte<sup>n</sup>ant, som of us were of opinion that the hazard were too greate to adventure so many of Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> forces as were thought requisitt to be employed in that expedi<sup>co</sup>n; yelding this reason amongst others, that the forte being valued at the highest was noe way comparable to the loss, yf tharmy shold receive any disaster in the attempt; But when wee saw his Lo., and the M<sup>s</sup>hall stande so muche uppon the honor of the service, alledging how greatly yt concerned Her Ma<sup>tie</sup> in hon<sup>r</sup> to have the forte releevd, we left to themselves the resolu<sup>co</sup>n, wishinge by waye of advice after they had determyned yt shold be attempted, that the L. Lief tenant wold undertake the matter in pson; alledging amongst many other respects, that in that case his Lo. might drawe w<sup>th</sup> him many of the nobilitye with their followers, wch wold greatly strengthen the acc<sup>co</sup>n, and besides his p<sup>s</sup>ence in the field might move Tyrone, eyther for feare or for som other respectes, to give way to him, whereby the service might be p<sup>er</sup>formed with less daunger. And before this consulta<sup>co</sup>n havinge considered thorowly of the pills in this enterprize of the forte, and the difficulties to accomlishe the same, the Lo. Lieutenant and o<sup>r</sup>selves jointly together wroate to the M<sup>s</sup>hall, lyinge then upon the borders, and w<sup>th</sup> all sent our speycall f<sup>res</sup> to bee conveyed by his meanes to the Cap<sup>n</sup> of the Blackwater, advisinge him to consider howe he might make his composi<sup>co</sup>n with Tyrone in tyme, to the most hon<sup>r</sup> he cold for Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>, and best saffety for himselfe and the garrison there; but the M<sup>s</sup>hall stayinge these f<sup>res</sup> in his owne hands, did not send them to the forte; but brought them back agayne with himselfe, affirminge how dishonorable it wold be to hold that course; and that he knew by good intellegences that the forte was yett in case to hould out; and that he had tryed by stratagem to send some vittles into them. In our advice wch we gave to his Lo. for undertaking the service in his owne pson, wee putt him in mynd that the prosecu<sup>co</sup>n of Leinster might bee commytted to som other duringe his absence: But his Lo. and the M<sup>s</sup>hall agreeinge afterwarde, his Lo. tooke upon him the matters of Leinster, and left to the M<sup>s</sup>hall the acc<sup>co</sup>n of the Blackwater; who accordingly came to Armagh the 13<sup>th</sup> of this mouneth, w<sup>th</sup>out any loss, other then the takinge of Cap<sup>tn</sup> Ratcliff prisoner, and some 4 or 5 others cutt off in the straight betweene Dondalk and the Newry, who stragled after the armye, and did not march under the saffety thereof: and the next day, beinge the 14<sup>th</sup> of this p<sup>s</sup>ente, th army dislodginge from Armagh with purposs to pass further to revittle the Blackwater, the rebells of the North havinge waylaide them there, in places to ou<sup>r</sup> disadvantage roase owt with their mayne forces to stopp their passage; where after a sore tryall made by the army,

stryvinge to put the rebells from the advantage of theire place, our forces were repulsed with a greevousse loss, both of the Mshall himselfe with sundry other pticular Cap<sup>ns</sup> with their coollores, and also a great number of the souldiers; the resedue that remayned (except som of the Irish who rann to the rebells) retyred to Armagh as the next place of succor they cold gett, where they remayne in the church there, awayting for soch comfort as men in so great a calamity may expect. These heavy newes were brought to us this day by Cap<sup>n</sup> Charles Montague who having the second place of chardge of the horsemen in the service, and beeing appointed by the consent of the Cap<sup>ns</sup> (as he affirmethe) to adventure thorow thenemyes countrey to come to us, hath made declaracōn to us of this lamentable accident in this summary manner, w<sup>h</sup> herewith we send to y<sup>r</sup> LLs under his hand. A matter soe greevousse to us, in respect of soe greate a dyminuacōn of Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>s forces in so daungerous a tyme as this. And to have soe greate a pte of the armye (beeinge 1500 men, as Cap<sup>n</sup> Montague reportethe) cooped by in the church of Armagh envyroned round aboute with the rebells, as we cannot but feare farr more daungerous sequells, even to the utter hazard of the kingdome, and that owt of hand, yf God and Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> prevent them not: for we assure ourselves that upon this accident in the North the whole combinaacōn of the reste of the rebells in all ptes of the Realm will grow mightely prowde, and will not spare to take the opportunitye of the tyme, and pursue this success at Armagh to their best advantage in Leinster, Connaught and all other places of the realm. And they know as well as ourselves that we are not hable wthout psente succor owt of England to fetch off those poore distressed companies that are in Armagh, who (as Cap<sup>n</sup> Montagu reportethe) hath vittles to serve them for 8 or 9 daies, and not further; wthin wch tyme wee have no meanes to reskow them from thence by force, nor after that tyme to releve them with vittles; wch being a most lamentable distress to us, wee have now signified the same to the Lo. Lieftenant Generall, who as we heare is at Kilkenny, praying his speedy repayre hither upon this heavy occasion. This encounter at Armagh was the 14<sup>th</sup> of this psente, and the report thereof brought to us this daye about 9 in the morninge; since when we have bin busie to send owt many dispatches into sondry ptes of the realm to prevent daungers, and contayne the people as moche as in us lyeth; and have specyally written to the Lo. Lieftenant Gen<sup>l</sup> to haste hether with all speed to thende to consider with him of the pnte daunger in all ptes, and howe Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>s forces, that are left, w<sup>h</sup> are wholly under his chardge, may be employed to the moaste saffety of the realme, and pservaacōn of that w<sup>h</sup> remayneth. But under y<sup>r</sup> LL's honorable reformaacōn, and in all humble dischardg of o<sup>r</sup> duties, wee wishe that Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> were thorowly enformed of the daungerous estate of this realme, as well for want of forces, by reason of this defeate as for lack of skillfull and experienced coīmanders; and pticularly this desaster of Armagh having taken awaye the Mshall, w<sup>h</sup> place is in Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>s disposiacōn, wee humbly wishe that som well chosen pson beeing of good understanding in the warrs may be sent from thence owt of hand, to supply that office, to thende that by thassistaunce of suche an officer Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>s initiall services may bee carryed in that course wh is requisitt agaynst so many prowde rebells in sondry ptes of the realm. And though the Lo Lieftena<sup>nt</sup> bee now absent from hence whereby wee

cannot communicate with him in this and other things as were meet, yett yf his Lo. were here, wee doubt not but he seeth reason to be of our opinyon, that inasmuch as the distresses of this kingdom are devided into many ptes, and every pte hathe his pticuler daunger, that that necessity presseth to have a further assistaunce in the proceedings of the warr, and a subsistinge authority to be joined with his Lo. unless Her Ma<sup>tie</sup> wold be pleased to settle the whole government entyrelly in one man's hands, w<sup>h</sup> for our ptes, wee wishe, for the avoydinge of many confusions, growinge in the mayne government, now that the auctoritie is devided, wch it is not unlyke wold be better redressed, yf the sup<sup>r</sup> authority were reduced into one man's hand, as Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> deputy; the considera<sup>con</sup> whereof we humbly submytt to y<sup>r</sup> Lo. grave advice. Onely and lastly beseechinge y<sup>r</sup> LLs with all the dutye and carefulness we can, that tyll a Deputye may come a Mrshall may be sent with suche other assistaunts for the warrs as yo<sup>r</sup> LLs shall think requisitt, and that also a further force of men may be sent owt of hand, the certaine number whereof we cannot otherwaies lymitt then according the greatness of our daungers: and that such as shalbe sent may be trayned men, well weaponed, and consistinge of hable bodies, to be hable to beare owt the toyles of this hard service. This choiss of a Deputye, or in the mean while some good assistaunts for the warrs, to be assigned and sent owt of hand with forces, the longer yt is deferred the more will it encrease the daungers of the realme, for that boath thennemyes will multiply, and insult, knowinge how weake wee are, as well in commanders as in men; and the subjects that yett stand will take yt for an occasion of discouragement when they see soe small means to defend them. Suche further advertisements as wee shall receave of this desaster of tharmy in the North, or of any other matter occurringe in any other ptes shall be signified to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs with the beste speed we can, being most greaved that this wicked land will not yett yeld better matter to advertise to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs. And so beeing greatly fearfull that Tyrone in the pryde of this success will bend some daungerous attempts against the Newry, Dondalk, Knockfergus or other frontyer places of importaunce, wee most humbly take our leve

“In great haste at Dublin 16<sup>th</sup> August 1598,

“Y<sup>r</sup> LLs most humbly at commandment

“Least Tyrone might use further violence to those distressed companies in Armagh we thought good to send a Pursyvaunt to him wth o<sup>r</sup> lre, the copy whereof wee send to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs herewith having directed the Pursyvaunt to learne the true state of the soldiers, with other instru<sup>con</sup>s wch was our chefe purpose in sending him to Tyrone.”

“AD. DUBLIN

“ROB. GARDENER

“ANTH<sup>y</sup> S<sup>r</sup> LEGER

“H. WALLOP

“GEFF. FENTON

“1598. 16 Aug<sup>st</sup>. *The Reporte of Capt<sup>n</sup> CH. MONTAGU.*

“On Mondaie the 14<sup>th</sup> of Auguste thArmie marched from Ardmagh (leving there all o<sup>r</sup> victualls and some muni<sup>con</sup>) for the Blackewater, by computa<sup>con</sup> 3500 footte and 300 horse: their forme was in 6 regiments: we marched severally sum 6 or 700 paces, distance betweene ech regiment;

of waye beinge harde and hillie grownd, within calliver shotte of wood and bogge one both sides, which was whollie possessed by thennemy, continually playing uppon us. After a myles marching thus we approached thennemys trench, being a ditch caste in fronte of our passage, a myle longe, som 5 foote deepe, and 4 foote over with a thorney hedge on the toppe: In the middell of a bogg som forty score paces over, our vanguard passed the trench: The Battaill stood, for the bringinge upp of the Saker, wch stucke fast in a forde, and also our reare, wch being hard sett to, retyred fowly to Ardmagh. In the mean tyme the vangard passinge on, was soe distressed as they fell to runne, and were all in effect putt to the sworde, without resistance: Upp cam the Marciall, beeing cheife comander to releave them, whoe was killed dead, in the hedd wth a bullet; not withstandinge 2 other regements passed over the trench: The Battayle coming upp, 2 barills of powther tooke fier amongste them, by wch they disrancked, and rowted. In which whyle thos 2 former regements beeing passed the trench were for the most pte putt to the sworde; then by the helpe of our horse, thennemies muniçõn beeing well spent, wee brought off the reste into the plaine, and soe recovered Ardmaghe, where the Capteins resolved to refreshe their men with victualls, and muniçõn, and soe to marche dyrectlie to the Newrie. In the meane tyme thennemies approached and fell round on all sides of us with their whole force: then the Capteins fynding thinsufficiencie both in mind and means of ther men, concluded that the horse shold adventure to breake forwthe through th'ennemy's quarters, and soe passe into the Palle to advertise the Statte, that psent succor might bee sent to fetch them off; or ells thennemie seeinge the horse gone might bee pswaded that they havinge a monethe, or 2, victualls, wch indeed was there but disposed uppon their first resoluçõn soe as they made account they had not now lefte meatt for above ten daies at the uttermoste, that thennemye cold not keepe together, hearinge by a prisoner that was taken that O'Donnell and Mc'Gwier was then reddie to depte. The horsemen accordinge their desiers pformed yt with som losse: by the Capteins estimaçõn wee had killed and run away to thennemie not less then 1800 foote, some 10 horsmen and 30 horsse; the ennemie loste, as wee hearde by som of theirs that we tooke, 7 or 800. Ther remains of ours about 2500 in the church of Armaghe.

“CH. MOUNTAGU.”

“1598. 16 Aug<sup>st</sup>. THE LORDS JUSTICES AND COUNCIL to TYRONE.

“We have taken knowledge of the late accident hapned to pte of Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> forces employed in Ulster, only for vitlinge of the Blackwater, and that many of them are retyred into Armagh, where they now remeyne: we thought good upon this occasion to sende to you on their behalfe; though we thinke that in y<sup>r</sup> owne consideraçõn you will lett them depte w<sup>thout</sup> doinge them any further hurte: wee are to putt yo<sup>e</sup> in minde howe farr you may incense Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> indignaçõn towardses you if you shall doe any further distresse to those companies, beeing as you know in cold bludd; and on the other side howe farr you may move Her Ma<sup>tie</sup> to know a favorable conceite of you by usinge favor to these men; and

besides your auncient adversarye the Mshall being now taken away, wee hope you will ceasse all further revenge towards the rest, against whom you can ground no cause of stinge against yo<sup>r</sup> self, being employed by Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> in theis Her Highness' services. Thus much we thought good to sygnifye unto you, and by waye of cawtion to admonishe you, to avoyde to pvoke so mighty a Prince upon such a matter as to distresse her servitors in cold bludd.—To this ende we have sent this bearer the pursyvant, by whom wee expect yo<sup>r</sup> answee. At Dublin 16 Augustj 1598

“ AD. DUBLIN, CANC.

“ RO. GARDENER

“ H WALLOPP.

“ GEO BOURCHIER

“ GEFF FENTON

“ *To Therle of Tyrone.*”

“ 1598. Aug<sup>th</sup> 17. THE LORDS JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

“ It may please y<sup>r</sup> most hon<sup>r</sup> LLs. Albeit we have now joined with the rest of this council in a lre to y<sup>r</sup> LLs sygnifying the most wofull and greevous accydent of the Marshall's death, and defeating of that army, yet fearinge greatlie least that blame might bee ymputed unto us w<sup>ch</sup> we have not deserved, we have made most humbly boulde in our own dischardge to trouble y<sup>r</sup> LLs w<sup>ch</sup> these fewe lynes *in private* from o<sup>r</sup> selves: we hope y<sup>r</sup> LLs do well remember, howe absolutelie Her most excellent Majestie hath left the managing of all the marshall affaires in this realme to therle of Ormond L<sup>t</sup> Lieften<sup>ant</sup> Gn<sup>rl</sup>; and wee lymitted onelie to the administraçõ of civile justice; not havinge to deale with so muche as the distribuçõ of the treasure sent. Nevertheless, as by all former dispatches yo<sup>r</sup> LLs might pceive wee have not fayled to bend our whole studie in assisting his Lp: from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes with our best advise in any of his affayres concerning Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>'s service: And touching the victualling of the forte at Blackwater, yt it is well knowen to all this table, uppon consultaçõ had thereof, howe muche agaynst our advise and myndes the same was undertaken. We alleadged the difficulties to pform yt, the chardge and exceeding troble that yt wold bee, both to the soldiers and miserable contry, and lastlie the great pril and imynent daunger wch yt wold bringe the whole realme into (yf yt were undertaken, and tharmy defeated) as now yt hath don. Yelding our opynion that yt were more convenyent and far more salfe, rather to quitt that forte wch might have bin don wth good condiçõs beeing of little worthe in respect of other places, and easy to be built agayne, with good convenyency, and thre or four daies stay of tharmy whensoever they should pceed northward—and therefore to defend the Pale beeing the hart, and in a manner all that is now left of the whole body, untill Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>'s resoluçõ had bin understood here for a full and throughe psecuçõ of these warres, wch hetherto had byn so exceedinge chardgeable unto Her Higness. This we urdged with suche vehemencye as was offensive to som, howbeit all the reasons and pswasions wch we cold use would not drawe his Lp: and the Marshall from their intended purpose to victualle yt, wch beeing so determynd by him who had the disposing of those causes absolutelie

in his own hand, and no power in us to alter yt, we then wysshed, and urdged muche that his Lp would himselfe undertake that service, beeing of so great ymportaunce, and then alleadged two reasons which did especiall move us so to advise his Lp. The first was that wee knew yf his Lp wold goe himself in pson he shold bee accompanied with the moast pte of the nobilitie, and their followers, with many other gent<sup>n</sup> voluntarie attendaunts, whereby he shold bee a farre better and greater armie then otherwise he cold sett out with the marshall: Thother was that yf yt came to that extremytie wch now (alas!) yt hath don, wee thought the great Rebell would have had more reverence and regard to his Lps pson, place, and calling then (we were sure) he wolde have tothe M<sup>r</sup>shall, agaynst whom he bare a deadlie hatred. Yett his Lp, beeing either unwilling or unable to endure that troblesome jorney, answered us that himselfe could not be spared from the service in Leinster, wch he wolde attend. And havinge so resolved, layed that other service upon the Marshall, who spedd unfortunatelie therein, tothe losse of his owne lyfe, and a great pte of that Army, except the horsemen, whereof as wee understaund, none perished. The distresse of the rest, now invyroned bythe Rebell at Ardmaghe, and apparent pill of this whole state. The L. Lieutenant returning then to Kilkenny hathe there and thereabouts remayned ever since, as yett he dothe; the Leinster rebels beeing nevertheless exceedingly encreased, and daily burning, preying, and spoyling the contrye, having alredey possessed themselves of all the Queenes County called Leix, some three or four castles at the most excepted, which cannot long hold out. There they possesse the lands so dearly bought by Her Majesty and her pdecessors, and doe even in peaceable manner enioye the goodes and cutt downe and gather the cornes of thauncient English gent<sup>n</sup> of that country; to the great discomfort of all our nacōn remayning in this wretched contry. (the lyke sturre have they already begon in offaly, called the King's county, and the lyke ende, in all lykelyhood, will they make there; the Rabbell of them being nowe by this disaster so encurraged and encreased as they doe even what they list w'hout controlm'. A greate pte of the county of Kildare they have alredey spoyled and burned, and daylie advertisem<sup>ts</sup> we have of there entraunce into the county of Dublin, and of their purpose, even this day, as we understand, to make heade even towards this citie; to wch God knoweth they may make an easie approach, yett have wee, to encounter their comynge, sett out this present mornyng the number of six or seaven hundred of cittizens and others to ympeache their purposed approache. This (and worse than wee have saide) is the state of Leinster. For Connaght, howe muche this blowe hathe weakened yt, and strengthened the Rebellls of that Province, yo<sup>r</sup> LLs may conceave: and Mounster not free from infection, very lykely to brust out, and this is now the state of this poor and most miserable lande!

“ Thus muche in effect have wee in divers our former private l<sup>r</sup>es foretould, and sygnified to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs, and this doe wee now agayne in dischargde of our most bounden duties declare to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs. Wee have noe meanes left in us to help o<sup>r</sup>selves, and the remnant of Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> poore subiects here; onely this wee beseeche Thalmighty God soe to styrr upp the hart of o<sup>r</sup> gracious Sovereigne hir most sacred Mat<sup>ty</sup>, as yet at leingth (and allmoste to late) she will behold o<sup>r</sup> miseries w<sup>th</sup> the eyes of compassion: thinke

uppon a present course touching the forme of this government; and speedily undertake a Royal and stronge psecution agaynst these vile ungratefull Rebels, otherwise shall not wee bee hable to render any other account to Her Highness then that her Realme is lost. We have in all hast by two sev<sup>al</sup> messingers acquainted the Lo. Lieftenant w<sup>h</sup> this callamytie, desyring his speedy repayre hither, w<sup>h</sup> suche forces as hee may make, and convenyentlie spare, at whose comynge wee will use all o<sup>r</sup> beste meanes for the bringing off the rest of tharmy now remayning in Ulster, wch wee thinke wilbe very weake: and so w<sup>h</sup> o<sup>r</sup> prayers we comēde yo<sup>r</sup> LLs to God's most blessed ptection

“ From Dublin the xvij<sup>th</sup> of August 1598

“ Yo<sup>r</sup> LLs most humbly at comandm<sup>t</sup>

“ AD DUBLIN

“ Ro GARDENER

“ For her Ma<sup>ties</sup> Affayres

To the Honorable the LLo: and others  
of hir Ma<sup>ties</sup> most Honorable Privie Councill  
*Haste, Haste, Haste, Haste, Haste.*

Delivered to the sea: on Fryday at 10 of the clock  
in the fornoone, the 18 of August

“ AD DUBLIN.”

“ 1598. Aug<sup>st</sup> 16<sup>th</sup>. LIEUTENANT WILLIAM TAAFFE to H. SHEE, ORMOND'S Steward.

“ M<sup>r</sup> Steward, notw<sup>h</sup>standing that my Lo. Liftennant may be advertised by others of o<sup>r</sup> ill successe this northren Jorney, yet for that I sawe the same, I thought good to wryte to youe therof, not presumyng to send unto his Honor. On monday last the Marshall sett forward from Ardmagh a myle on the right hand side of the coñon high way in wch my Lo. Borrough past to the Blackwater, and on either syde of us thEnemy shott at us contynually, untill our vantgard possesst the trenche wch thenemy made for our stay; and past forward to a skons made upon the topp of the hill beyond the same; where they remayned a pretty while, and skhrmish being hotlie entertained upon our Reare, thenemy on horsse and foote chardg our companyes and bett them back to the trench agayn, where they were for the more parte all slaine; and their sev<sup>al</sup> collo<sup>es</sup> taken by the enemye. The Marshall was then comeinge from the Reare of the armye and chardged downe with the battle of our army, and our horssees wch were in the vantgard, and in his goinge downe he was slayne w<sup>h</sup> a shott through his forrhead; after whose death wee that were on horssback found no goinge where the rebels stood by reason of a mayne bogg; and neverthesse our battle of foote went thether, where they lost the moste parte of their shott, and four Captains, and came by force of thenemy agayne, at what tyme the wheele of our saker, the great peece, being broken, leving the same behinde wee made our retreyte unto the Abbey of Ardmagh, and rested there till night; and finding our weakness to com from thence, the next daye wee concluded that the foote companyes should lye there, having vittuals for som while; and wee came ourselves that were of horsse hither. And now M<sup>r</sup> Steward yf youe will have my opinion in

the cause of our losse, I protest it was only for the great distaunce that was betwixt us in our marche; for when the vanguard was chardged they were w<sup>h</sup>in sight of our battle, and yet not reskued untill they were overthrown. Withall in the same time wee had a fyrcken or two of powther that went a fyre in the battle, which spoyled many of them and disordered others, and withall our great peece did us much hurte, stayinge our marche at every 12 score ende. We lost 18 Captains, of wch M<sup>r</sup> Moylmoora Reylie is one, whoe in presens of many tried his loyalty and valure. And so God save me, so did the rest of the captains as much as might be donn in so ill ground; beinge woode and Bogge on either side of a marche unto the trenche; thennemye had nombers of shott; we understand of thother side to have lost som three hundreth, beside Art M<sup>c</sup>Barron's two sonnes, Magyr his sonn, and two of their leaders, and wee lost above a thousand soldiers. And seeing there are soe many captains lost I thought fitt to praye youe to bee a meane to my L. Liffennant that I may have one of their chardges, asshuring myself that very fewe will be sutors for the lyke. The greatest in numbers of their soldiers that escaped is not 12 men to any one company; wherein I trust you will deale carefully, for w<sup>h</sup> I will rest thankfullie unto yourself, and I wold understand my L<sup>ds</sup> pleasure herein by this berer, to thend I may erect some followers agaynst his Honor's coming downe, for they wilbe hardly gotten now, unlesse men have frends of there owne that will followe him, as p<sup>tly</sup> I have; yett ther armor and making upp will cost a great deale of money. I refferr that matter to yo<sup>r</sup> discession and will looke for present answeere by the berer. Yf my Lo. Liffenant will graunt me any companye, pcure me Capten Hyushies, who hath 10 Englishmen left. Yf you wold knowe the names of those that are slayne, of the captens I remember theis many, Pettytt, Street, Tornor the great, Leig, Evans, Hawes, Elsdonne, Fortscue, Hushie, Brooks & Ratchiff. Taken prisoners Cosbey, Burk, Bethell; and many others slayne, and thus hartely comendinge mee to yourself and all in gen<sup>ral</sup> not forgetting my cosen Taaff, M<sup>r</sup> Butler, Watt, and Harry Gore, I take leve the 16<sup>th</sup> of Augus<sup>t</sup>, 1598.

“Yo<sup>r</sup> wo<sup>r</sup> to use

“WILL<sup>m</sup> TAAFFE.”

“1598. Aug<sup>t</sup> 18. ORMOND to the QUEEN.

“Most gratus and dred Sovaine I cannot in regard of my most humble dutie but make knowne to yo<sup>r</sup> Highness that the traitor Tirone, having sent forces to sevall p<sup>ts</sup> of Leinster to assist the traitors there, and stur rebellion in Mounster, hit was concludid by the LLs Justices, the Councill and myself, upon a mo<sup>con</sup> and offer made by the m<sup>sh</sup>all, that he w<sup>h</sup> a force of 4000 foote & upwards, and 320 horse by pole, shold go to relyve the forte of Blackwater, and my selfe w<sup>h</sup> the fewe companyes that were spared to prosecute the traitors in Leinster (of whiche p<sup>vince</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>ty</sup> in yo<sup>r</sup> f<sup>res</sup>, and the LL. of yo<sup>r</sup> Highness councill ther comanded mee to have specia<sup>ll</sup> care): In whiche p<sup>secution</sup> som of the chefe traitors among them w<sup>h</sup> divers of there follow<sup>rs</sup> were putt to the sworde, others also that were entering into rebellion in Mounster were stayed by mee, and beeing nowe redy to make a roade against Donill Spanaghe, I receaved (to my exceding grefe) sevall f<sup>res</sup> from the LL. Justices & others, of the m<sup>sh</sup>als ill successe, hapned

(as it is enformed) for want of good directions; the p<sup>t</sup>iculars of all whiche (for avoydinge yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>ties</sup> trouble) I have sent to the LL. of yo<sup>r</sup> Highness counsell to be made knowen to yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>tie</sup>, most humbly praying yo<sup>r</sup> Highness that it may stand w<sup>th</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> princely pleasure (for the saftie of yo<sup>r</sup> Realme) whiche is hearby greatl<sup>y</sup> endangered to send greater forces with all spede, w<sup>th</sup> victuals munition & other necessaryes to suppress the prid of these malicious & unnatural traitors, whom God of his goodness spedely confounde! and blesse yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>tie</sup> with a long, most happy & victorious raigne, to the Cōforte of mee and all other yo<sup>r</sup> faithfull subjects.

“Your Maiesties most faithfull

“And obedient Subiect

“And Sarvant, till death

“THOMAS ORMÖD ET OSS.

“From Yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>ties</sup> Towne of Kilkenny  
the 18<sup>th</sup> of August, 1598.”

“1598. Aug<sup>st</sup> 16. CAP<sup>n</sup> MONTAGU to ORMOND.

“I have sent yo<sup>r</sup> Lo. herein a note of all the Capt<sup>ns</sup> slayne: of soldiers I assure myself not less than 2000 w<sup>th</sup> many officers. The Cap<sup>ts</sup> finding themselves noe waye able to returne, for that thenemy fell round about ther quarters, w<sup>th</sup> all ther force, resolved, that yf I wold adventure w<sup>th</sup> all the horse in the night to breake through them, and soe yf I cold, to passe to the Newry, then they had shuch a preportion of vittuals as wold kepe them viij dayes. In wch tyme they hope yo<sup>r</sup> Lo will make some speedy expedition to fetch them of: or ells O’Donell and M<sup>c</sup>Guoire, being also in want of victuals would returne hoame, and then they would see if they cold pass away in one night to the Newry. I thought my lyfe well adventured to save soe many, attempted it, and cam away w<sup>th</sup> sum vij score horse, w<sup>th</sup> very little loss, though they contynually followed mee, and at my passage out of the campe gave me a great volley of shott: they have veray small store of municōn, and ther Irish run continually to the rebells. I much feare they will betray them, for I was no sooner gone but I might here them in very hot skirmishe in the quarters. These I cold not but signify to yo<sup>r</sup> Lo. in brefe, leaving the p<sup>t</sup>iculars till I may attend yo<sup>r</sup> Lo., and so humbly take leve.

“Dublin the xv<sup>j</sup><sup>th</sup> of Aug<sup>st</sup> 1598

“CH: MONTAGU.”

“1598. Aug<sup>st</sup> 23. THE LORDS JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

“It may please yo<sup>r</sup> LLs since our last dispatch wee have used sundry meanes by espiall and otherwaies to discover the manner of the late desaster near Ardmagh, and the estate of the residue of the companies remayning of that defeate, and retrayted into the church of Ardmagh, as wee have formerly written to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs: By which course wee have received many intelligences from seval ptes, but for that they contayne both varieties and uncertainties, we cold not settle any good ground of advertisements to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs tyll this daye that Capt<sup>n</sup> Fernando Kingsmeale and Cap<sup>n</sup> Georg Kingsmeale, beeing both actors in the same, retourned hether, assuringe us that all the companies remayning of that defeate were safely returned to

the Newry with bagg and baggage, and their collors displayed, and are there remayninge, awaytinge som good opportunitie to be drawn from thence to their former places of garrison: these two Capt<sup>ns</sup> being psente in the accon, wee have willed them to sett downe faithfullye their observations of the whole pceedings, together with all meet circumstances in their knowledge for thexplanacon of the whole service, which collection digested and subscribed by them wee have sent herewith to yo<sup>r</sup> LLs, untill wee have a more full informacon from Sir Thomas Maria Wingfield, Lief-tenant Colonell, and Capt<sup>n</sup> Lundy, S<sup>r</sup>jeant Maior of those companies whoe are nowe at the Newry, and have not as yett written anything to us of this matter. We find by the 2 Kingsmeales that at the deptinge of the companies from Ardmagh, yt was agreed that they shold marche dyrectly to Dondalk, but they, for som respects knowen to themselves, breakinge that agreement tooke their way ymmediately to the Newry, from whence yt wilbe veray hazardous for them to come to Dondalk by land, havinge to pass thorough a dangerous straitene betwene the Newry and Dondalk, called the Moyerye, which wee heare Tirone hath manned to impeach their passage, taking, as yt seemethe, his occasion in that they went to the Newry at first, and not to Dondalk, according the agreement. But we are now in consideracon howe to fetch them from the Newry either by land through the Moyerye, wch will be veray daungerous, if that straitene be manned by the traitor Tirone, as we hear yt is; or els by sea from Carlingford, by the helpe of such shippinge as wee may pvide here; which though it may be thought not fully honourable, for that heretofore yt hath not bin usuall, yett for that the companies are pestered w<sup>th</sup> sundry hurte men whoe are not hable to march by land w<sup>th</sup> the army, and that they have muche baggage, which otherwaies they cannot carry, beeing utterly destitute of garrans and all portage overland, we dowte that this necessity may dryve us to fetch them of by sea; yett, with their pservacon and saffety wee find that they cannot passe through the Moyerye, and yett in either of these choises we knowe there wilbe great difficulty. Wee have written to them to leve a suffycient gard in the Newry before their cominge from thence, and in the mean whyle I, the L. Lieftenant, will give order to send from hence to Dondalke a companye of foote to reenforce that garrison, yf from the Newry noe other companies be sent thether afforehand. Touching the manner of this service neere Ardmagh, and the nombers of ourside that fell therein (which we finde are not so many as was geven out at first) together with the remain, which (God be thanked are more than was reported to us by Cap<sup>n</sup> Montague) wee humbly referr yo<sup>r</sup> LLs to this report now sent of the 2 Kingsmeales, whom Tirone detained with himselfe as pledges for the saffe retorne of such as he sent with the companies from Ardmagh. And by their reporte yo<sup>r</sup> LLs may see in what sorte the forte of the Blackwater was delivered up, and that dystressed garrison preserved which hath bin the cause of all this desaster. Such further matter as wee shall gather, either from Sir Thomas Wingfeild or the S<sup>r</sup>jeant Maior, or otherwaies tending to a more certainty or ptcularity of this conflict, yo<sup>r</sup> LLs shall receive from tyme to tyme, as the same shall come to our hands: humbly beseechinge Yo<sup>r</sup> LLs in the mean whyle, as in o<sup>r</sup> last letters we urged, to remember to comfort us with a psent force of men armed and weaponed answerable to supplie the losses of tharmy sustained

in this defeate; a matter which we eftsones doe most humbly and earnestly recommend to yo<sup>r</sup> honourable care, the better to enhable us to stand against so many immynent daungers which from sundry pts threaten this estate, and that yo<sup>r</sup> LLs would cause vittles to be sent with them proporconable to the numbers that shall come.

“AD DUBLIN. RO GARDENER  
 “THOMAS ORMÖD ET OSS  
 “ANT<sup>y</sup> S<sup>r</sup> LEGER G. BOURCHIER  
 “GEFF. FENTON.

“Since the signinge of this letter wee received advertisement from Sir Thomas Wingfield that the companies that came from Ardmagh, are come safely to Dondalke over the Moyery without any impediment of thenemies, and I, the L. Lieftenant Gen<sup>l</sup> am now preparing to drawe to the borders to take order for disposing of them, and I hope the losse will not fall out so great as was reported, for that I understand by one Marmeaduke, Lieftenant of the Marshal’s horsse company, who was in the fight, that the nomber slayne is a good deale under a thousand men.”

1598. Aug<sup>st</sup> 23.

“The declaration of the Cap<sup>m</sup> Ferdinando and George Kinsmells to certain questions demanded of them touching the late service.

“First—Howe marched Tharmy from Armaghe towards the Black-water ?

“The said Cap<sup>m</sup> say Tharmy marched in six Regiments, the Vangard led by Corronell Piercy, seconded by the Marshal’s Regiment. The Battayle led by Corronel Cosby, and seconded by S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Maria Wingfield’s Regiment.

“The Rere of all led by Cap<sup>n</sup> Cuynys regiment and seconded by Cap<sup>n</sup> Billings regiment.

“Howe far from Ardmaghe began the fight ?

“Within half a myle we entered the skirmishe, and cominge w<sup>h</sup>in the daunger of a bogg and woode where they played on us on all sydes, which was mayntayned to the trenches, being two miles from Ardmaghe.

“What was the reason the Vangard was not seconded beeing possessed of the Trenches ?

“Cap<sup>n</sup> George Kingsmell who was in the poynte saieth that the Marshal’s regiment who was to second the poynte was in distance soe far of, and hotly fought withal that they cold by noe means com up to second them, whereby the whole Regiment was defeated, and all the Cap<sup>m</sup> slayne. Collonell Piercy and Cap<sup>n</sup> George Kingsmell onely excepted, who by a stand made by the horsse recovered their second.

“What did the broken Regiment when you came to the second ?

“Capten George Kingsmell saieth they joyned with the Marshal’s Regiment their seconds, and put themselves in order, and chardged agayne to the trenches, which they won the second tyme, and for want of secondinge by the Battayle was defeated as the first.

“What was the reason the Battayle came not up ?

“They say that the saker, being bogged, staid the Battayle so longe, and thenemies gathered soe about them in such multitudes as they cold

not boothe second the Vangardr and save the ordinance. Yet Collinell

A litel before Cosby went up, the Marshal was slayne, and two barrels of poulder blown upp in the Battayle, wch spoyled many men and disordered the Battayle.

Cosby, having the vauntgard of the Battayle, advaunced with his Regiment for the saffegard of those that were broken, w<sup>h</sup> whom he joyn- ing, and the Rere of the Battayle remayning with the saker: for want of seconding, his Regiment was lost, with the rest of the Vaunt- gard, and Cosby himself taken prisoner. The Rere of the Battayle mayntained fight for the

saker, which cold not be recovered by reason yt was bogged, and the oxen killed that drew it; uppon which accident and the former defeatment Sir Thomas Wingfield chief commander, the Marshal being dedd, commanded the Retreate to Armagh: and Cap<sup>n</sup> Ferdinando Kingsmell who was in

There was likewise fired in the Rere 2 barrels of poulder to the great hurte and dismay of the Enemy as appeared by their cry at the sight thereof.

Cap<sup>n</sup> Cuyny, S<sup>t</sup>jeant Maior's, Regiment in the vantgard of the Rere saieth that they were so hotely fought withal by the force of O'Donell, Magwyre and James M<sup>c</sup>Sorley theire horse and foote, that in an houre and a halfe they cold not marche a quarter of a myle forward, by which means they never understood in the rere

of the killinge of the Marshal, nor of the defeatinge of the former Regi- ments, until they came up to fetch off the Battayle with whom they joined, and leving the saker bogged and not to be recovered they marched with the assistaunce of the horsse, altogether to Ardmagh, where we fortified and kept the place until Therle offered composiçôn uppon these condiçôn's following.

"First that we shold quit the Blackwater, leving there the collors drumms and muniçôn; the Cap<sup>ns</sup> having left them onely their Rapiers and hacknies; and that beeing delivered, the whole Army with those men of the Blackwater shold marche away from Armagh with all their carriage and hurte men to the Newrie or Dondalk, for p<sup>r</sup>formance whereof pledges were putt in on both sides. For the Army the 2 Cap<sup>ns</sup> Ferdinando and George Kingsmell, and on Tirones pte two of the Hagans the men of most estimaçôn in this country, wch of each pte was accordinly pformed, and the army beeing come to the Newrie where yet it remayneth, the two Cap<sup>ns</sup> were sent to Dondalke, who are now repayred hither, and do make this reporte.

"Howe many do you thinke of the soldiors did run away to the enemy?

"By the reporte of all the officers there run away no lesse then 300 of the mere Irishe being Ulster and Connaght men, and two Englishe men of the newe supplies, who the next morninge called to their fellowes and told them Therle would give them 20<sup>s</sup> a piece for ymprest if they wold serve him, and for all the rest of the newe supplies wee think that the better halfe of them is lost, for many of them were slayne without making any resistance.

"What strength thinke you the army to be of nowe?

"We can give no certaine reporte thereof; but by the certificate made of them at Armagh they appeared to be above 2000.

"Howe many were the Enemyes in number, do you thinke?

"We cannot reporte any certainty thereof; but by viewe and estimacōn they seemde to bee about five or six thousand shott; and Richard Weston hath reported and saith he will depose that before ioyning they were mustered 8000.

"What is the reason, as you have heard, that Tیرهone offered such composition to the army?

"Being pledges for the pformance of the condiçōns before specified, Thearle gave for the reason that he was at five hundred pounds charge by the daye, in kepinge his forces together to attende our army; and that he supposed wee had a moneth or six weeks victuall, in which tyme he knew (as he saide) that forces would land in Loghfoyle, and therefore he thought it better to save that charge, to gayne the forte of the Blackwater, and to bend himself to hinder the landing of our forces in Loghfoyle, then by lyinge by us, w<sup>h</sup> so greate charge, to hazard so many inconveniences as he feared he might otherwise fall into.

"FERDINADO KINGSMYLL.

GEORGE KINGSMILL."

"1598. Aug<sup>r</sup> 24. ORMOND to CECYL.

"S<sup>r</sup>—Although I know the jointe lres written to the LLs there from th LLs Justices myself and the Councell here, of the late accident happened to the Marshall in the north, will com to your hands: yett the losse of our syde being since delyvered to me by severall men, as appeareth in the enclosed notes, I thought fytt to sende the same to you; whereby yt appeareth that our losse, God be thanked, is not all so greate in the slaughter of the men as was first reported; though to greate and shamefull as yt is! Our newe men sente over for supplies never offered to fight; but, as their leaders saye, ranne awaye most cowardlie: castinge from them their armour and weapon, as sone as the rebells chardged them. I finde by examyninge this matter that wante of good direction was the cause of their overthrowe; for the armye were putt to sixe bodies, and marched so far asonder as thone of them could not come in tyme to seconde nor help thother; whereof I warned the Marshall to take speciall care, before he went hence. In the middest of this feight there were 2 or 3 barralls of powder putt a fyre in the Battayll, which blewe upp and hurte divers of our men; wherew<sup>h</sup> the traitors were encoraged, and our men dismayed. Hit is very necessarie, uppon the sendinge over of forces, to sende trayned men that have seene som service, consideringe that they come to be presently employed, and can have no longe tyme to be dysciplined here. Fewe or none of the newe supplies brought backe their armes; soe as the proporçōn of muniçōn to be sent hether had nede to bee the greater. I wish the leaders of those that shall come were men of experience in service, whereof I doubt not you will have that consideraçōn that is fytt. And so for this tyme I comitt you to God's blessed protection.

"Your veray loving

"And assured Frend,

"THOMAS ORMÔD ET OSS.

"From Dublin the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 1598.

"I do sende you hereenclosed the copie of a lre wch pre<sup>t</sup>elie I received from the constable of Her Majesty's house of Dongarvan."

“ 1598. Aug<sup>r</sup> 24.

“ On Weddnesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of this p<sup>s</sup>ente, wee beeing at the Newry, the Chaunter of Armagh came thether, wch when we understoode of, we went unto him to entreate hym, yf he cold, to use som meanes for the obteyning of leve from Tharchtraytor Tirone to bringe the deade corpes of the Marshall Sir Henry Bagnall from Armagh (where yt then was) unto Newrie, wch the Chaunter promised us he wold doe his beste to pforme; that he wold go himselve unto Tirone about it. Then we demaunded of hym what newes he had heard from Tirones campe concernynge the nomber of tharmye that was slayne, and the nomber that was likewise slayne of the Rebells; to wch he answered; that he had newes from Tirones campe by some of his owne people that came from theynse, that they did reporte amongst themselves howe they had killed 600<sup>ths</sup> of Her Majesty's Armye, and that there was killed of their own men but six score, whereof, the Chaunter said the chefest were two of Art M'Barrons sonnes, two of O'Cahans sonnes, M'Kennahs sone of the Trough, and a sonne of Donell M'Sorleys sonne: and the Chaunter told us for certen 600 was all that Tirones campe did make reporte of, they had slayne of the armye. And thus much is all that we can delyver touchinge this matter, wch wee will if we shall thereunto be required, affyrme uppon our corporall oathes to be the true reporte of the said Chaunter unto us. Witness o' hands the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 1598

“ MAR: WHITECHURCH, Lieftenente of the Marshalls  
horse troupe

“ JOHN LEE, Secretary to the Marshall.

“ *Captens and Officers slayne in the Jorney to the Blackwater.*

The General

Capten Strete

„ Pettitt

„ Henshaw

„ Foskewe

„ Evans

„ Turnor

„ Leigh

„ Morgan

„ Elsdon

„ Radcliff

„ Mulmore O'Rylie

„ Romney

„ Langhton

„ Bethell

Captain Cosby taken  
prisoner.

Hurte men 363

Slayne 855.

The Generalls ensigne Coullors Loste

Coronell Percy's ensigne Coul<sup>rs</sup> Loste

Sir George Bowrchiers ensigne Coll<sup>rs</sup> Loste

Capt<sup>n</sup> Turnors ensigne.

The Generalls Lieutenant

The Lo. of Delvin his Lieut<sup>t</sup>

Sir Henry Norreys his Lieut<sup>t</sup>

Capt<sup>n</sup> Streete his Lieut<sup>t</sup>

Cap<sup>n</sup> Fernando Kingsmill his Lieu<sup>tt</sup>

Cap<sup>n</sup> Parker his Lieut<sup>t</sup>

Cap Leigh his Lieu<sup>tt</sup>

Coronell Percy's his Lieut<sup>t</sup>

Lieut<sup>t</sup> Massye.

Cap<sup>t</sup> Eustaces ensigne Collours Loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Pettitts Col<sup>r</sup> Loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Foskewes Col<sup>s</sup> Loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Evans Col<sup>s</sup> Loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Leigh his Coullors loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Morgan's Col<sup>s</sup> Loste  
 Cap<sup>n</sup> Elsdon Col<sup>s</sup> Loste—Cap<sup>n</sup> Langhtons Co<sup>ls</sup> Loste  
 13—”

“ *The Opynion of Corronell BILLINGES and the Cap<sup>tns</sup> of that regiment whoe are nowe at Dublinge, whose names are underwritten.*

“ It was concluded by the cownsell, the daye before wee marched tow<sup>ds</sup> Blackwater, that the syxe Regiments shoulde marche in syngle bodyes till such tyme as they sawe eache other ingaged, and then to ioyne in three bodyes for eache others releife, yf they founde the grownde answerable. The daye of our fyght, weare first commanded Capt<sup>n</sup> Lee and Cap<sup>n</sup> Turnor w<sup>h</sup> a partie of men to leade the forelorne hope. The pceedinge whereof, and the secondinge of them we comende tothe reporte of Sir Richard Percy and the commanders of the Marshalls Regiment; and to the secondinge of those two regimentes to the reporte of Cap<sup>n</sup> Cosbye, whoe had the vann of the Battle, and to Sir Thomas Winkfeilde whoe was to ioyne with him. The Vann of the Reare, Capt<sup>n</sup> Cuyny, bein Sarjent Maior, had, and the Reare of all had Capt<sup>n</sup> Byllinges. So the other Regymentes marching, the Sarjent Maior's Regiment and the Reare marched in one bodye to the forde, and at the forde the Sarjent Maior's Regiment tooke the vann of the Reare, beinge his place. The Reare noe soner recovered the hill beyonde the forde tow<sup>ds</sup> Blackwater but the enemye charged us with horse and foote, to the number of 2000 foote, and 400 horse. Havyng long entertained skyrmishe, and by reason of the great number of the enemys shott and horse comynge so neare and faste upon us, we weare forced fore or fyve severall tymes to charge with our Coullors in the heade of the fyghte, by reason our shott was so beaten, and our newe men bringing the rest in confusion; being thus in fyght our Regiment could not gayne a buttes lengthe in three quarters of an hour. The wch the horsemen of the Reare, and the Sarjent Maiors Regiment canne witnesse, whoe came to seconde us; whitch when thenemye seeinge quytted us, and then bothe Regiments made tow<sup>ds</sup> the Boogge, wheare beeinge neare uppon the entraunce of the Boogge the Sargent Maiors Regiment drue of the right hande, and the Reare directly over the Boogge, and beeing noe soner come over but the Sargent Maior gave me, Cap<sup>n</sup> Byllinges, dyrection to retreate, and make good the Forde. And in our retreate we garded the deade bodye of the Marshall, and Sir Calystynes Brookes being hurte, and the most of the hurte men. Besydes the three peeces of ordynance and the remaynder of the munycon. So beeinge come neare the forde we sawe thenemye bothe horse and foot with the collours flyinge wch was taken from the Vanguard of all, myndinge to make goode the forde before us. Then wee first havinge atteyned the forde, made it goode. Then Smythe one of the corporalls of the feilde came to mee, Cap<sup>n</sup> Billinges, in the hearinge of Cap<sup>n</sup> Hawes, with dyrection to make good a hill betwixt Armaghe and the forde tyll suche tyme as the rest came upp;

the weh was pformed, and in our retreat to tow<sup>ds</sup> the hill the enemy's horse cominge to cutt betwixt us and Armagh, we shott off the biggest of the three peeces of ordynance which made the enemy to stande. So leving theis our knowledgements for that dayes service under our handes, to which wee wilbe sworne, and pawne our lyves. Comēdyng the same to yo<sup>r</sup> Lordships Judgements to sensure accordinge to our desartes.

“ANTHONY HAWES.

“I. BYLLINGES

“F. FETEPLACE.”

“1598. *Sep<sup>r</sup> 4.* THE LORDS JUSTICES to the PRIVY COUNCIL.

“It maye be that some dislyke may growe upon a fre wee thought to send to Tirone upon the first reporte of the accident at Armagh. And though at that tyme wee had som reason to hould that course, yett upon better deliberacon *wee revoked the letter* and wold not suffer yt to bee sent; having this device at the first, that the letter shold bee but a coollor to send to see the state of the companies, wth direccion that yf there were anie possibilitie to fetch off those companies, the letter shold not be delivered; which was accordingly pformed, and wee have at this psente the fre in our handes, which is true upon our credit.

“AD. DUBLIN. RO. GARDENER

“F. WALLOP. ANTH<sup>r</sup> S<sup>r</sup> LEGER

“GEFF. FENTON

“FENTON to CECYL.

“R<sup>t</sup> Honourable youe may see by the general fre nowe sent what an entraunce is made to a devision amongst the principal commanders in this government, yf yt bee not stopped in the beginning. The LLs Justices have gott knowledge that the L. Lieftenant seekethe in som sorte to incnlp them for the disaster of Armagh, and pticularly that they were the cause that the mshall was employed on that accōn and not his Lo, which they deny, and may truly defend the contrary. Their LLs with som moe of the counsell having advised the L Lieftenant in a consultacon, holden for the matter of the Blackwater, to take that service upon him in pson. But by these differences I see a preparation to a further devision daungerous for this state yf from Her Ma<sup>tie</sup> yt bee not countermanded, assuring your Honor that, the kingdome beeing rent and broken in diverse ptes of yt, there remaineth nothing whole, savinge the unity of the counsell; which I see will fall by these variaunces in the heads, yf owt of hand yt be not pvented, and therefore yt may please your Honor to move Her Majesty that, by the next, a round and pemptory comandem<sup>t</sup> may come in Her Mat<sup>s</sup> name to us all to surcease all private emulacons and pticularly all further proceedinge in this contention of the Blackwater; but that wee shold all lend our uttermost endeavours to recover this kingdome that is almost gon; and rather to supple the general soares thereof by good agreement, one with another, then to make bleed more through our disjoyninges and differences. A fre to this ende despatched in the begynninge wold (I thinke) ende the matter fully, or at least stay yt tyll with better opportunity yt might be further examined. I penned the general letter now sent, being so commanded by the LLs Justices whome I might not disobey;

but my advice in council was, that seeinge (I saide) as Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> was to muche troubled already with the distractions of Ireland, so she cold not but bee deeply offended to see these disagreements amongst the council whose ptes it is to kepe the whole in unity, they wold therefore forbear that course. Besides I alledged that for their LLs to contend by accusa<sup>ti</sup>ons and expostula<sup>ti</sup>ons in a matter that already is past remedy it cold not but be thought to hold more of fac<sup>ti</sup>on then of good pretence or ground of matter: for my pte I have subscribed the letter, for that in so runninge a consent, yt was not meet for me to dissent, yet I stand cleare by the advice I gave, that the letter shold be suppressed, and not sent, which I humbly pray yo<sup>r</sup> Honor, may serve for my defence. And so do leve yo<sup>r</sup> Honor to consider that this is a daungerous fruite of this devided and doble authority in the government, which still will break owt to further mischief tyll yt shall please Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> to settle the government in a Deputy's hand; which the longer yt is deferred the more are the daungers norryshed. God Almighty preserve yo<sup>r</sup> Honor.

“ In haste at Dublin 16<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>.

“ Your most humbly to be commanded

“ GEFF. FENTON.”

“ *Sept<sup>r</sup> 15. ORMOND to CECYL.*

“The LLs Justices might have written more advisedly then to say the hole army was overthrowne; truely hit might have be<sup>n</sup> so, yf God had not letted hit; for there disorder was suche as the lyke hathe not be<sup>n</sup>e amonge men of anye understanding, deviding tharmye into six bodies, marchinge so farr asonder as one of them could not second nor help thother till those in the vangard wear overthrowen. Suer the devill bewiched them! that none of them did prevent this grose error. Sir, for that I understand the LLs Justices wrote over to you after this disaster that hit was not there act to send the Marshall, but that it was a plott set downe betweene him and me, I have thoght goode for profe of the contrary, to send you the inclosed notes which I pray you make knowen to Her Majestye in my discharge; being lothe to trouble you farther at this tyme I committ your guiding to God.

“ From Ratothe the 15 of Septēber, 1598.

“ Your fast assured loving frend,

“ THOMAS ORMÖD ET OSS.

“The bearer was with the Marshall when he was slayne, who can tell you how ill ovr companies were placed, not beeing able to co<sup>m</sup> to help one another I pray you afford him your honourable favor.”

“ *Sept<sup>r</sup> 12, 1598. THE QUEEN to the LORDS JUSTICES.*

“Wherein [the arrival of Sir Richard Bingham] we knowe that you and our cousin of Ormond, our Lieutenant, will find great ease in every way. It beeing neither fitt nor possible that you shold spend your bodye

in all services at all tymes, and yet we must pleynelly tell you that we did much mislike (seeing this late accōn were undertaken) that you did not above all other things attend yt; thereby to have directed and countenanced the same; for yt were strange to us when almost the whole force of our kingdome were drawen to hedd, and a mayne blow like to be stroken for our honor, agaynst the cappytall rebell, that youe whose person wold have better daunted the Traytor, and would have carryed with yt another manner of reputacōn, and strengthe of the nobilitie of the kingdome, shold employ yourself in an accōn of less importance and leve this to see meane a commander.

"Wherein [in the matter of the Blackwater] we may not passe over this fowle error to our dishonor, when you of our counsell framed *such a letter to the traytor after your defeate, as never were read the lyke either in forme or substance for baseness! beeing such as we persuade ourself, yf you shall peruse yt agayne when you are yourselves that you will be ashamed of your own absurdities, and grieved that any feare or rayshness shold ever make you aucthors of an accōn so much to your Sovereign's dishonor and to the increasing of the traytor's insolency.*<sup>1</sup> For other things past wee have well observed, that all y<sup>r</sup> Jjourneys and attemptes uppon the northe have had theise successes that not only our armyes have come backe w<sup>h</sup> losse or doing nothing, but in their absence other parts of our kingedome have ben left to be spoyled and wasted by the rebells; and though the unyversalltye of the Rebellion may be used as a reason of the mischiefe, yet it is almost a miracle that w<sup>h</sup> the charges of an armye of eight or nine thousand men the provynciall rebells of Leinster and Wexeforde and other places should not be mastered.

"POSTSCR:

"Synce the wryting of this Ire we have understoode that y<sup>r</sup> Ire w<sup>h</sup> wee heard from yo<sup>a</sup> was sent to the Traytor by y<sup>a</sup> hath synce ben stayed *by accident*, whereof for our owne honor wee are very gladd, though for y<sup>r</sup>selves the former purpose still deserves the same imputacōn.

"At Greenwi<sup>ch</sup> the 12th of Sept<sup>bre</sup> 1598."

"Thus," writes Camden, "Tiroen triumphed according to his heart's desire over his adversary, and obtained a remarkable victory over the English; and, doubtless, since the time they first set foot in Ireland, they never received a greater overthrow!—13 stout captains being slain and 1500 of the common soldiers, who being scattered by a shameful flight all the fields over, were slain and vanquished by the enemy. This was a glorious victory for the rebels! and of special advantage; for hereby they got both arms and provision, and Tiroen's name was cried up all over Ireland as the author of their liberty."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Italics are not in the original.

<sup>2</sup> For the account of this battle given by P. O'Sullivan Beare, Fynes Morrison, and

various Irish authors, see "Annals of the Four Masters," A. D. 1598, edited by Dr. O'Donovan.

Why did O'Neill permit that broken, dispirited, famishing band of fugitives to depart unmolested? Why did he not march on Dublin? A satisfactory answer to either question must be sought elsewhere than in these State Papers. O'Neill knew, as the Lords Justices truly wrote, as well as they did, the full extent of their forlorn condition. There was not, as far as we know, a single soldier left in that panic-stricken city. Six hundred townsmen were all that could be mustered to venture forth to impeach his approach; the gates were instantly closed behind them, and kept closed by day and by night. About 4000 effective foot soldiers and 300 horse, exclusive of the disorganized companies, cooped up in the church of Armagh, were all that now remained of English force in Ireland; and they were far away, with their Lieutenant-General in Kilkenny. O'Neill knew this perfectly. It is true that a reinforcement of 2000 men was daily expected from England, and their destination was Loughfoyle; but O'Neill was too good a soldier to believe that such a handful of men would venture to traverse a country up in arms, to encounter a force flushed with victory, and, perhaps, ten times their number! It is stated that O'Donnell and Maguire, who, unlike O'Neill, had come without provisions, could no longer keep the field; but as "the ordinary food of the rebel Irish was a kind of grass," they might have pastured themselves along the route to Dublin as well as elsewhere. A thousand men, nay, a hundred! would have taken Dublin on the 16th of August, 1598, or any successive day, till Ormond returned!! But Tyrone went back into his own country, and Ireland was saved for "her most sacred Majesty."

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